Library

THE MUSKET

Lexington High School's Student-run Newspaper — since 1969

Volume LI — Issue III — April 2009

Consistency the goal in change to tardy policy

By Tim Kenny
Editor-in-Chief

In the midst of some of the recent technological overhaul at Lexington High School, a policy change has been made with regard to how teachers deal with unexcused tardiness.

Various administrators, including Associate Principal Laura Lasa and Principal Natalie Cohen, say that the recent change is not a "policy change" but a "change in how tardiness is addressed."

While no official changes have been made to the text of the student handbook, students are now punished for unexcused tardiness with a short after-school detention with the teacher of the class to which the student was late.

Previously, it was left to teachers' discretion as to how to deal with tardiness. Some teachers would simply mark the student as tardy, while others would keep students after school.

"There wasn't a consistent standard around the importance the school placed on not being tardy," Lasa said. "There has been confusion between the classroom teacher and the dean about who addresses tardiness."

According to the recent statement, which was

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Comedian, LHS grad to speak at graduation

By Noah Karr Kaitin
Editor-in-Chief

On June 7th, Eugene Mirman is scheduled to address the graduating class of 2009 as the student council elected guest speaker. Mirman was selected unanimously by the senior class council. Mirman, who was born in Russia, spent his childhood and teenage years in Lexington, and graduated from LHS in 1992.

After graduating, Mirman attended Hampshire College, and since then has made a name for himself as an actor, stand-up comic, and author. His stand-up act has appeared on shows like *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* and *Comedy Central Presents*. Mirman currently plays the eccentric landlord "Eugene" on HBO's *Flight of the Conchords*.

Mirman has produced two stand-up albums and released *The Absurd Nightclub Comedy of Eugene Mirman*, a CD/DVD in 2004. The album was voted one of the Best Albums of 2004 by both *The Onion* and *Time Out New York*. His second album, *En Garde, Society* was released in 2006.

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Silence Speaks

Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

People of all ages, races, sexual orientations, religions and belief systems came together Friday, March 13, to make up a "Shield of Loving Kindness" — silently protesting the presence of the Westboro Baptist Church from Topeka, Kan. WBC arrived on Worthen Road (opposite LHS) to demonstrate against what they see as the acceptance of diverse lifestyles at the high school. (See page 2 for an additional feature photo).

A night with the School Committee candidates

By Jonah Bader & Noah Starr
Staff Writers

On Tuesday, February 24th, the Student Faculty Senate, along with the Lexington High School PTSA, hosted a School Committee Candidates Night. Jessie Steigerwald, Patrick Mehr, and Mary Ann Stewart all participated in the event, with the election quickly approaching. Two of the three candidates will be elected in the town-wide election. Steigerwald and Mehr are running for reelection, while Stewart is hoping to be elected for her first time on the school committee.

The Student Faculty Senate provided 3 panelists, a moderator, and a time keeper. Noah Karr Kaitin, Secretary of Senate, acted as moderator and facilitated the candidates' rousing debate.

The three panelists, Jacquelyn O'Connor, Hannah Galin and Noah Star asked questions to spark discussion and to learn about the candidates' positions on issues. The panelists asked prewritten questions as well as questions that were submitted by the audience during the event. Noah Coolidge took his time-keeping job seriously, despite the candidates' tendency to talk over the allotted time. Most of the questions came with a three minute limit.

Not surprisingly, many of the questions focused on budget issues given the current economic recession. Such questions addressed faculty benefits, staff layoffs, and overall ways to balance the budget. The panelists also asked questions about the value of Advanced Placement classes and diversity in parent involvement.

All of the candidates' platforms had overlying themes of saving money while still providing the outstanding education for which LHS is known. The debate was civil, although at some points, especially during the discussion about teacher healthcare benefits, the candidates became aggressive in order to voice their opinions.

All of the candidates' platforms had overlying themes of saving money while still providing the outstanding education for which Lexington High School is known.

Mehr repeatedly suggested that the town of Lexington join with the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), a statewide health insurance program. He asserted that by doing so, the town would save money on faculty healthcare benefits. This single comment incited considerable dialogue between Mehr and Stewart. While Mehr favored joining the GIC, Stewart seemed to feel that there were other and better opportunities to save money on health benefits.

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Recently Mirman published his first book, *The Will to Whatevs*, a satirical self-help book. According to Mirman, "the only person who wouldn't enjoy this book would be a half-robot like Elisabeth Hasselbeck"; Hasselbeck is the notoriously conservative, ex-reality show star, co-host of *The View*. Mirman has also opened for various bands including The Shins, Modest Mouse, Cake, and Yo La Tengo.

Mirman recently preformed a reading and Q&A at the Brookline Booksmith. When asked about his high school experience, he conveyed the picture of an awkward, slightly nerdy kid who tried his best to get a laugh and didn't care all that much about grades. In fact, Mirman has openly shared that his parents, while he was still at LHS, received a letter to inform them that their son's GPA of 1.93 was not enough to receive open campus privileges.

Mirman has openly wondered why he was invited to speak. He is certainly different from the other more motivational, or academically accomplished, speakers whose names were floated as possible candidates to speak.

Dr. Michael Fiveash, who taught Mirman, fondly recollected Mirman as a student.

"I really remember his campaign to be class president. Most of the other candidates were straight arrows but Eugene was something else," said Fiveash. "His posters were brilliant. They said, 'Eugene Mirman, Not Just a Change, a Mutation.' I would have voted for him in an instant just because of that."

"Class council was actually thrilled that Eugene would even be willing to come to our graduation," said Senior Vice President, Hilary Ludlow. "He's a big name, and despite his questions regarding his appropriateness as a speaker, we're sure he will be side-splittingly funny and well worth it."

Upon hearing the news of Mirman's scheduled appearance, Chris Herndon, a senior, and the school's most renowned Eugene Mirman fan, remarked that "this is sure to be the best thing to happen to LHS since sliced liver!"

Mirman is taking his role as graduation speaker quite seriously. He took the job after making sure he could "be the person who filled people with hope as they set out to find their way in the world."

CANDIDATES cont. from **PAGE 1**

All three candidates were focused on finding ways to save money in order to keep as many programs as possible for the future. The current economic climate has presented some difficulty for the school committee in finding ways to balance the budget. Still, Steigerwald articulated her belief that programs such as Debate are integral to a student's education, even though it does not affect a large portion of the student body. Overall, the night was entertaining and informative, as each candidate strived to get their points across and sell themselves as much as possible.

In the end, Steigerwald won the most votes, followed by Stewart, and then Mehr. Steigerwald and Stewart are now Lexington's school committee members.

TARDY cont. from **PAGE 1**

sent to all faculty and presented by teachers in class, students who are late to class must stay after school with their teacher and discuss the reasons for their tardiness.

While nothing has been added to the official attendance policy in the student handbook, this formalized system is meant to stress the importance that the school places on attendance and to supplement how the N policy deters tardiness.

The new tardy policy is analagous to the unofficial policy that deans use to give detentions to students who cut class. Detentions for both cuts and tardies serve as an immediate deterance for those students who would otherwise not be impacted by their actions until they recieved their second N.

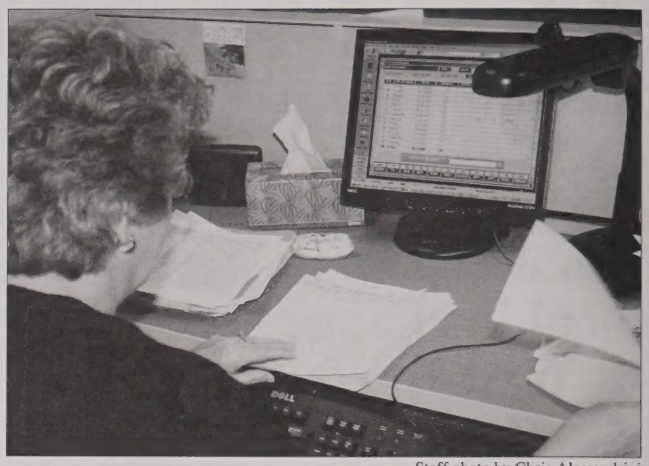
The N policy, which was implemented eight years ago, was the school's first formal attempt at curbing tardiness, and also marked a significant change in how cuts were addressed. Prior to the N policy, students who cut three classes in a quarter lost a general graduation credit off their total.

As the policy currently stands, two N's, the equivalent of at least three cuts in two quarters, result in a student receiving no credit for the course and having to retake it during the summer or the next year. Under the previous policy, a student would still get credit for the class, but would have two general credits deducted from his total. There was no immediate consequence for tardiness, and the loss of a general credit did not affect a student until graduation at the end of senior year.

"The N policy cut down on a lot of tardiness," Lasa said. "And we saw the tardiness go way down."

While the N policy makes no mention of how tardiness is addressed beyond counting towards an N, this standardization hopes to affect what impact tardiness has on a student's N status.

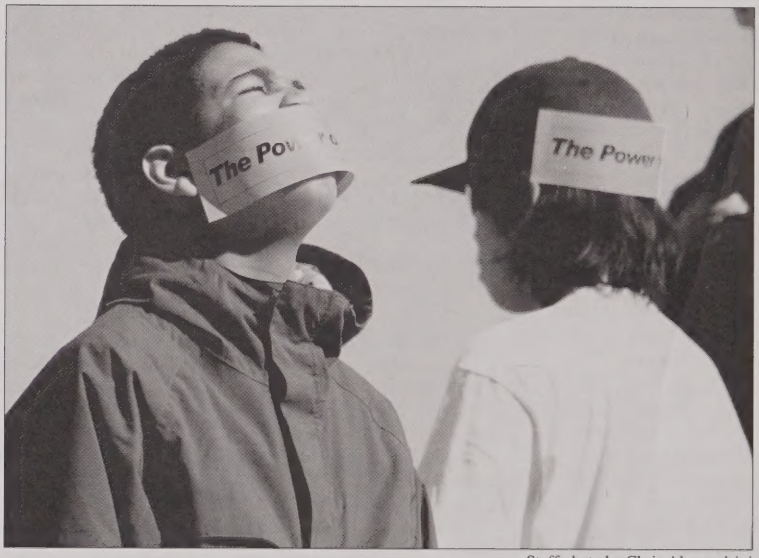
The Attendance Review Committee, which Lasa formed earlier this year, has already met once and will reconvene again at the end of the year to assess how effective the new, unofficial tardy policy has been.



Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

Main building house secretary Ms. Couture works hard at the end of the day to record and sort dozens of now no-longer-in-use attendance sheets.

A Voice Is Heard



Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

Two students atop a snow bank in LHS' front parking lot participate in the peaceful protest against the WBC (see feature photo on page 1). These students chose to demonstrate their frustration with WBC's polarizing message with 'the power of silence' stickers symbolically placed over their mouths.

THE MUSKET

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In the absence of the weighted GPA, AP students still get the point

By Emily Dodson
Staff Writer

The debate of whether or not to remove the weighting for Advanced Placement and honors courses ended long before my class, the class of 2011, came to LHS. Although the practice of awarding an extra point for advanced classes is commonplace in most other schools, LHS found that the extra point system was not applied equally across all disciplines, giving students with interests in certain areas an advantage over others. Currently, the LHS 4.0 GPA system weights all classes equally.

Student response to this change is mixed. Some students will always take the most challenging courses, yet a striking number of LHS students report that the lack of weighting has affected their course selection. For example, a freshman girl who spoke on condition of anonymity said, "No way am I taking the risk of AP Bio without the weighting." Other students did not discover the harsh reality until report cards were released. A surprised sophomore boy, who also asked not to be identified, commented on his honors math grade. "I guess this C is really just a C now."

As students try to hedge their bets between standard grades and a range of course offerings, many wonder what effect this current system will have on their ability to compete with students from other schools for the small number of available spots at the most elite colleges. According to Amy Kirkcaldy, admissions officer at Harvard College, the school is "prepared to handle grades in any form—weighted or otherwise."

"We use no formulas in admission and look at candidates individually," she emphasized. "We expect candidates to take the strongest program that makes sense for them." Harvard, like most colleges, will often turn to the school for clarification if they don't understand the grading system or any other characteristic unique to that school.

When it comes to whether a student should take the harder honors class for a B or the lower level class for an A, Kirkcaldy made Harvard's position clear. "We prefer A's in the tough course!" She laughed and then added, "We don't admit schools—we admit students."

LHS' decision to remove weighting forces us take a harder look at what our education means to us. We should pick the courses we want to take without trying to impress admissions officers, teachers, or parents. Each of us should consider higher level classes when we have enthusiasm for studying that subject. There is no reward for taking a risk merely to pad our transcripts; however, those who let their passions shape their course selections are rewarded with a deeper educational experience. Ultimately, as we move through LHS, we need to keep in mind that our education belongs to us.

RYAN MAHER
WHY USE TECHNOLOGY WHEN IT IS SO MUCH MORE FUN AND TAKES SO MUCH MORE TIME TO DO ATTENDANCE BY HAND?!
WHATS NEXT? - THE EVOLUTION OF ATTENDANCE
IT DOES IT ALL!
ZERO TARDIES REMAINING JOHNNY
SENIORITIS RULES!
Comic by senior Ryan Maher

Community building the focus in moving LHS toward that 'small school feeling'

By Mark Chonofsky
Editorials Editor

Lexington High School strives to be a "learning community," according to its mission statement. Therefore, it is critical to examine what it means to be a learning community in order to understand where LHS needs to go.

There are many different definitions of a community, and the idea has been disputed for centuries. The German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies defines community as a "complete unity of wills" with "real organic life." The community, therefore, must work towards a common end and be devoted to all its members. This idea has many implications for the ways communities must act. The "unity of wills" means that every member must look out for every other member, and actions must be for the good of the whole. "Community life," he writes, "means mutual possession and enjoyment," and even "possession and enjoyment of goods held in common."

Tönnies describes the central characteristic of a community, as "a heartfelt sense of integration" or "mutual understanding" in which every community member feels and acts as a part of the whole. This conception of a community as a social group in which everyone works toward common ends is a very high standard. It certainly seems difficult to achieve in a school as large as LHS.

Perhaps surprisingly, then, students and faculty alike share the idea that community means strong mutual understanding. The administration strongly supports the idea that communities must be bound by a central purpose.

"Being a community," said Principal Natalie Cohen, "is the recognition of our common values and our common goals."

Likewise, students share this idea—they believe that LHS must be a cohesive whole in order to function as a community. Andrew Walsh, a junior, commented that "because of the diversity in groups at LHS, I feel that they aren't intertwined ... there are such big gaps between some people and others that it's hard to say that they are part of a community."

> ***"I think it comes as a surprise to people that they have responsibilities to this community."***
>
> *-Principal Natalie Cohen*

The large distance between students due to the size of LHS is problematic for many people, the administration included.

"When a community is this large, it's difficult to get your head around—or even get your arms around—everybody," Cohen said. "But I think it's even more important that we do that."

There are also, more concrete problems for the LHS community. A competitive atmosphere and disrespect for the school environment are two named by students and administration alike. Cohen spoke about her first assembly, in which the administration addressed cafeteria theft and vandalism.

"I think it comes as a surprise to people that they have responsibilities to this community," she said. "There was sort of an eye-opening, even a physical nodding of heads, that we have to give some thought to the common space that we live in for a large part of the day."

One student, who asked not to be named, pointed out other problems. "A lot of people do whatever it takes to get the edge to get the grade to get to college," he said.

He recalled a situation where a student had misled him about the date of a test. "I was truly shocked that someone would go that far to gain an advantage over me," he said.

Cohen points to a long list of "overloading of the library. Vandalism in the commons. Unevenness in the interpretation of what it means to be tardy. Unevenness in the doling out of detentions. Mess in the hallway." Yet despite the difficulties in becoming a community, she believes that LHS is making progress towards that goal.

"I'm very happy to report that yes, I have [seen a change in outlook]," Cohen said.

She highlights professional learning communities, the recently-implemented program at LHS designed to help teachers to work together.

"People are talking more," she said. "Cross-talk has increased. It builds a sense of community among teachers."

Inside the age-old tradition of Singing Valentines at LHS

Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

LHS' tradition lived on as Singing Valentine quartets serenaded unsuspecting students throughout the day. Seen above is senior Zach Abramo being sung to by a Singing Valentine quartet with seniors (from left to right) Sarah Hebert-Johnson, Gabrielle Zandi, Mariah Slone, and Eliza Strauss.

By Zach Miller

Editorials Editor

It is perhaps one of Lexington High School's greatest traditions, fun for both students and teachers alike. It is loud. It is mellifluous. It is Singing Valentines. LHS students look forward to this tradition throughout the year.

Feature

Even the bravest of souls — myself included — blush on the spot with four faces singing to them. Although the performers make it look easy, it is a much larger process than you would think. I interviewed a Singing Valentines veteran, Sarah Hebert-Johnson, about her experience with Singing Valentines for three years, and about the process that goes on in organizing who goes to which classes.

The audition process starts in December, when the members from previous years' quartets select the new singers. Following selection, all the singers then form new quartets and then create their own schedules for rehearsal after Christmas break.

"Most groups meet about once a week for a few weeks, and then depending on how they are moving along, they will do two to three times a week," Hebert-Johnson said.

The week before the day of performances, the groups increase the rehearsal time to make sure each member has their part down. Traditionally, the day before Singing Valentines, all the quartets will stay at the same house to perform for each other and get excited. Hebert-Johnson recounted that "this year my group decided to bake cookies and sing, practicing our multi-tasking, until we just had to go to sleep."

As opposed to the one receiving the singing valentine, Hebert-Johnson finds that "from the singer's perspective, it really is just a whole lot of fun." Perhaps from the amount of practice, or just from experience, it is clear that the singers are actually not as nervous as the receiver, who does not have to do anything but sit there and look pretty.

"By the time Valentine's Day rolls around, you are so tight with your quartet that you don't really even think about nerves" Hebert-Johnson explained. "Even though you are performing in front of your peers, you have this group supporting you at every second."

Not only are the acts perfected, but so is the schedule. Many people do not realize it, but organizing who goes to which rooms can be quite a complex task to those who have never done it before. Two weeks before the big day, the valentines are sold in Commons I by either male quartets, female quartets, or mixed groups. Then, at the party the night before, the three male groups, three female groups, and the mixed quartets divide each valentine by type and assign each one to the appropriate block.

"If there are, let's say, twelve valentines for B block, each group will do four, making it even. Following the long, exciting process, each group walks away with a stack of valentines for the next day," Hebert-Johnson said.

This party, however, isn't all business, however. After the dividing process, each quartet performs for everyone with one "victim" in the spotlight, sitting in a chair, like at school.

Despite all the hard work that goes into its preparation, Hebert-Johnson sums it up when she says that this LHS tradition is "so worth it."

THINK ABOUT IT:

"All growth is a leap in the dark."
-Henry Miller

Winter Jamboree a litany of vocal styles & talents

By Hannah Rosenberg

Features Editor

Lexington High School's annual Winter Jamboree was the perfect way to break up the monotony of winter and enjoy professional style entertainment courtesy of the school's talented a cappella groups. There were performances from the six LHS a cappella groups, plus a talented, high-energy college group sandwiched in the middle. This year's college group was The Brandeis University Starving Artists. Each group's performance was unique. They customized their terrific singing with coordinated costumes, clever introductions, dance routines, and light comedy. These elements added to the fun, excitement, and professionalism of the show.

Review

Rock Paper Scissors, an all male group, started off Winter Jam this year with energy and pizzazz. Their first selection, "Title of the Song" by DaVinci's Notebook, added comedy to their set. The song features the typical phrases commonly heard in broken-hearted love songs strung together as a song. The group ended with a taste of rock and roll, performing "Memory" by Sugarcult, complete with air guitars.

The all female group, Onomatopoeia, introduced themselves as "Lexington High School's newest mixed group." Half of them appeared dressed as males and half of them dressed as females. They beautifully performed "I'm Yours" by Jason Mraz, "One Song Glory" from the Broadway musical "Rent," and "Window in the Skies" by U2.

Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

Junior Camille Briskin solos in Guacamole's rendition of 'Landslide" at Winter Jam.

Guacamole, another all-female group, followed with a humorous introduction, they changed the words of Beyonce's song, "Single Ladies" to "Guacamoles." They dressed in ballet class attire, complete with pointe shoes and tutus. A couple of their selections included harmonious renditions of "The Scientist" by Coldplay and "Landslide" by The Dixie Chicks.

Pitchpipes, an all-male group, performed next. Their introduction was an attention grabber. Each member of the group dressed up as a video game character; they battled each other as authentic theme music filled the auditorium. They soon came to the realization that they should get along and be friends. Their introduction acted as a segue to the performance of "I'll Be There for You" from the show

WINTER JAM cont. on PAGE 5

Staff photo by Chris Alessandrini

Senior Alex Parrish solos during a performance with Pitchpipes during this year's Winter Jam.

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"Friends." They also featured a freshman soloist who sang "I Just Can't Wait To Be King" from Disney's "The Lion King." As they exited the stage, he was lifted like Simba on the shoulders of another group member.

Mixed Nuts' presentation was extremely unique, and it had salsa flair. They dressed in black and red outfits with each member carrying a red rose. Their first song, "Mas Que Nada" was Portuguese and it complimented the theme of their set: upbeat and exotic. They also sang "Breakable" by Ingrid Michaelson and a duet of "No Air" by Jordin Sparks and Chris Brown.

Last but not least was Euphoria, an all-female group. The girls started off with a bang, changing the words of the popular song "Disturbia" to "Euphoria" and dressed in black creepy Halloween-like garb to augment the terrifying aspect of the song. Although they were the last group to perform, they kept the energy up with "Send Me on My Way" by Rusted Root, "Not Ready to Make Nice" by the Dixie Chicks and "Dancing in the Moonlight" by Toploader. Their vigorous performance brought a satisfying ending to the night.

This year's Winter Jamboree showcased the wide range of singing talent that Lexington High School has to offer. This was a rewarding evening of musical performance, costuming, and comedy. Don't miss out on this year's Spring's Jamboree — scheduled for June 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium!

LHS senior given chance to play at the Grammys

By Abha Gallewale

Editor In Chief

This February, Lexington High School Jazz Combo bassist Raviv Markovitz spent a week in Los Angeles, where he got to play with world-famous jazz musicians, attend the annual music award show, and even play at the official Grammy after-party. Yes, those Grammys. As a member of the 2009 Grammy Jazz Band, Raviv was given incredible opportunities most professional musicians could only dream of. He got to play at the Grammy's Salute to Jazz, the Pre-Nominee dinner, and even the MusiCares Tribute to Neil Diamond.

Earning a spot in the Jazz Band was no simple feat. The competition included vocalists and instrumentalists nationwide who entered by submitting DVDs which featured three or four of their tunes that fit within the guidelines given. Of the thirty high school students who were selected, only four were bass players, making Raviv's selection all the more competitive. He says that he was "really excited" upon hearing the news but also nervous, feeling "anxious in a good way."

Beginning classical and jazz piano lessons at age five, Raviv picked up the bass in 5th grade, when he began lessons with Ms. Haas, LHS' orchestra teacher. "I didn't know how serious I was going to be about it when I first started," Raviv admits. Music is a daily part of life in his famil; Raviv's dad studies jazz piano. Raviv believes that his father was the driving influence behind his choice of instrument because piano and bass are paired well together in jazz music.

The young artists had a rigorous schedule during Grammy week. After orientation on Friday night, they rehearsed for the entire weekend at the Doubletree Hotel where they stayed, allowed a break only to watch the Superbowl that Sunday. The conductor of the Jazz Band was drummer Justin DiCiocchio of the Manhattan School of Music, whom Raviv describes to be a "really animated, interesting guy." Raviv believes he learned a lot about playing in a rhythm section, especially

The week's schedule included many exciting opportunities for the musicians to showcase their talent and learn from professional guest artists.

JAZZ cont. on **PAGE 6**

An open mind = LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES

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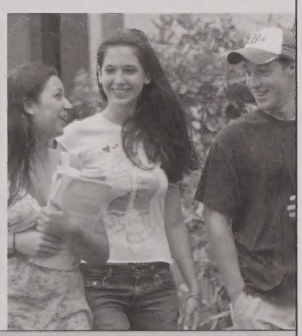

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Porter Exchange's Blue Fin boasts bold taste & unique style

By Alec Yeh

Senate Editor

Hidden among the cafeteria-style Japanese eateries and Asian markets, Blue Fin offers Japanese-Korean cuisine with the best deals on sushi. The restaurant, located in the Porter Exchange shopping center, is often infested with big parties and couples on their first date. Though their fish does not compare to those eaten at restaurants like Daikanyama in Lexington center or Toraya in Arlington, the quantity of fish for your money makes this place well worth the trip.

Blue Fin's décor is unlike any other place in Porter Exchange. The surrounding restaurants are casual in nature with exposed kitchens and loud, bustling mall patrons. However, Blue Fin is set off from the rest by its glass entrance that just beckons you in.

Though they do not take reservations, the wait goes by surprisingly fast. The moment you walk in, you forget you were previously in a mall. The décor is contemporary and very subtle. The lighting, though a little dim, gives an intimate vibe. The interior is not decorated with Japanese kimonos or authentic pottery, but rather with modern-shaped vases and ruffled panels which blend into the wall.

The service is friendly, but with so many customers, it's not a surprise that they may seem to forget you. When they do come back, however, they are as polite and apologetic as can be. Though the staff is dominated by waitresses, the host is an older man who is always moving around, trying to make room for the next group.

Their menu is not as large as other Japanese-Korean fusion restaurants, but they do have classics such as Bip Bim Bap and a variety of udon dishes. But what really draws you in is the amazing deals they have on the sushi.

Though you may order sushi a la carte averaging anywhere between $3-$6 per an order, I would not suggest doing so. The sushi combos are the best deal around. You may order anything from their selection of nigiri, rolls, and inside-out rolls, though their special maki is excluded from the combos. Prices start at $20 for 12 pieces of sushi, then $32 for 20, $46 for 30, and finally $100 for 100 pieces (40 pieces of nigiri and 10 order of rolls). For a dollar a piece, the 100 piece combo is plenty for a group of 6.

The nigiri is very heavy on the was-

BLUE FIN cont. on **PAGE 6**

Teachers Gettin' Schooled

Dean Caliri cuts past senior Masato Tsurumaki during the annual David Germaine Student v. Faculty Basketball Game Fundraiser Tuesday, March 31. Math Department Head Gary Simon waits for the pass (background) as Associate Principal Laura Lasa (right) referees.

Staff photo by Tim Kenny

Sophomore baseball captain for 2009 season to bring talent, ability to lead

By Jacob Friedman
Sports Editor

At first glance, Will Marcal appears to be just another bal player. His lanky frame and calm demeanor do nothing to grab the attention of the fans. He is, however, not just another ballplayer. Marcal graces the baseball diamond with a talent most could only dream of.

Marcal, who has been playing baseball since he was four years old, entered the spotlight at the age of twelve. For about three years, word of his talents had been spreading throughout Lexington.

It was said that as a fourth grader he was throwing five different pitches and that they had more movement than any other pitcher's in Little League. His ability to throw the ball fast and hit home runs had been accepted as fact. But it was in 6th grade that he established himself.

With his virtually unhittable pitching, Marcal led his Baystate team to a title in the Tournament of Champions, the most competitive form of summer baseball for Little Leaguers in Lexington.

In that same year, Marcal went on to play for the Eastern Mass All-Stars. This team was composed of the top twelve-year-olds in Massachusetts and played teams from across the nation at Cooperstown, New York, where the baseball Hall of Fame is located. Over the next three years, while continuing to play baseball in Lexington, he also played for the Scorpions, another national team.

Last year, Marcel made the varsity team as a freshman.

"It was a lot different than I expected...I didn't expect to play," he said.

He did more than just play, however; he was one of the starting pitchers and played right field in games in which he was not pitching. LHS made it to the second round of the state playoffs last year.

"Overall, it was a very good learning experience. I learned a lot from senior captains Jack Barons and Curt Everett," he said.

It is clear that Marcal is a star athlete, but Lexington has had star athletes before and will have them again. What makes him so special is that as a mere sophomore, he is a captain of the baseball team. The honor of being captain is not just given to players because they are stars, especially when they are underclassmen.

Captains are leaders and hard workers. When asked how he earned this captainship, Marcal immediately replied, "I work hard every single day in practice."

However, Marcal was not expecting this. He says he was "shocked to be [named] a captain" when it was announced at the team meeting. Nevertheless, he is not nervous and not scared. When asked about the difficult challenge of being a leader to upperclassmen, he replied that he had done it before. He beautifully captured the magic of sports: "Big picture, age is irrelevant; all that matters is whether you can get the job done."

Marcal believes that Lexington is likely to have an amazing next couple of years because of how young this year's team is.

Most of all, however, Marcal is modest. When asked about being a captain long term, he replied, "I'm not going to say I will be a captain (in future years) because if I don't do a good job this year, I shouldn't be a captain next year."

His humility is the main reason why fans might have some trouble figuring out who Marcal is when the Lexington baseball teams run out onto the field. Well, at least until he throws his first pitch.

Competitive skiing a bridge to stress relief

By Samantha Jacob
Sports Editor

Just because a sport is not offered at school does not mean one cannot ever play it. The closest Lexington got to the snow during this past winter's sports season is with hockey, but that did not stop students from grabbing his or her gear and heading out to ski.

Offbeat Athlete

Take Junior Marcy Solomon, for example. A skier since she was two, Solomon has developed a strong attachment towards the popular winter sport. She enrolled at Sugarloaf, one of Maine's hottest ski spots, located in Carrabassett Valley, to learn how to ski, and it soon "became [her] family thing."

One of the main reasons it attracts young people is that "it's outdoors and [a person] can go fast or slow or wander through trees, whatever [s/he] feels like," she explains. As it is a "huge stress reliever," she particularly enjoys skiing because "there's no drama involved."

The snow sport is not simply a hobby for everyone. Solomon did five years of alpine racing, including slalom. Not much of a freestyler, or "one who does tricks," she remarks that downhill racing is "really competitive, especially in Maine."

The skiing season usually lasts from November to April, but with this year's excessive snow, the season may even stretch into May, which she says is "exciting."

Even though she used to compete, she doesn't view skiing as "something to set goals for now." As an instructor, however, she loves "being able to teach a bunch of kids the things [her] coaches taught [her] when [she] was their age."

Maybe one day in the future, Lexington will offer skiing as a winter sport. But in the mean time, just as Solomon has found skiing to be her thing to "love to do and never get sick of," people can head up to Maine to enjoy the ski season.

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in a larger ensemble, from the experience. The groups even had the honor of performing after Jennifer Hudson at the MusiCares Tribute to Neil Diamond.

As Raviv's father watched Raviv perform in Los Angeles, he marveled at "how far music has taken him ... in such a short time.

One of my favorite things about watching Raviv play is seeing how much fun he has when he plays, and how the people he plays with seem to be uplifted by his kindness when he's with them ... playing anything with others can bring out the best and worst [of people]. In Raviv's case, I think he's at his best."

As a result of their monumental achievements, all of the Grammy Band selectees are accepted to the New School and the Manhattan School of Music and are eligible for over two million dollars in scholarship money.

Although Raviv has already proven himself to be musically versatile and talented, he plans to pursue a degree in bass after graduating LHS, hoping to double major. The Musket salutes his accomplishments and wishes him the best for his professional career in music.

BLUE FIN cont. from **PAGE 5**

abi. If you aren't used to it, it may burn your nose off. The slices of fish are quite generous, however. On the other hand, the inside-out rolls are a little lacking. At a dollar a piece, it's no surprise that some rolls are less filled than others. The variety of sea creatures is impressive, ranging from sea urchin to squid to octopus. Don't be afraid to try any of the exotic things they offer.

If you have any more room for dessert, Blue Fin offers red bean and green tea ice cream, but if you are craving something a little different, hit up the surrounding markets for some dessert. One of the Japanese eateries even offers mochi ice cream, a scoop of ice cream wrapped in a rice-flour skin.

Right across the way sits a little bakery that offers egg custards and sponge cake. The variety is endless at the Porter Exchange. Just don't forget to get your parking ticket validated to save a few extra bucks!

"A Story"
Once, there were two readers who both loved and had qualms with much of the content in their high school newspaper. What did they decide to do?
Write a letter.

Send your letters to
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